

by most progressive linguists and educators interested in simplifying the presentation of Arabic to students. We will concentrate on three figures from Egypt who have made noteworthy contributions regarding Ibn Maḍā': Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā, Shawqī Dayf and Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Bannā.

A. Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā

Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā published his landmark work entitled Iḥyā' al-naḥw, the Revival of Grammar, calling for the reform of Arabic grammar in 1937. Like that of Ibn Maḍā', his reform proposal calls for abolishing the concept of regency because the use of the regent had distracted the grammarians from a concern for how inflection markers indicate differing meanings. If he succeeds in this, he says, "we will not have to ask what the regent of each vowel is, but what meaning does this vowel indicate?"²⁹

Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā opens his work with a definition of his purpose followed by a detailed survey of how the regent had come to be used in traditional grammar.³⁰ After a lengthy, detailed and lucid presentation of how the noun can be treated in grammar without reference to regency, he concludes, "Regardless of how people receive this book, denigrating it or praising it, the grammarians will never

²⁹Iḥyā' al-naḥw, pp. 41-42.

³⁰See Chapter Two, the Regent, in this study where we have used his definition extensively.

again be able to resort to their worn-out theory of the regent...."³¹

The question we would like to raise in this section of our study is, "Did Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā arrive at his conclusion unaided, or was he inspired to write Iḥyā' al-naḥw after having seen the manuscript of the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians in the Taymūriyya library?" We know from a footnote, p. 195, n. 1, that he was familiar with the grammatical works in Taymūr Pasha's library, so it is reasonable to assume that he saw the work during the seven years he spent in preparation for writing Iḥyā' al-naḥw. On the other hand, he makes no reference to it anywhere despite the frequent references he makes to other grammatical works with which he was familiar.

In our reading of the two works, we have found a sufficient number of similarities, both in content and structure, to lead us to the conclusion that Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā had read the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians and that it indeed served as the main source for his call for grammatical reform. That is not to say that the two works are identical. Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā was not a Zahirite, therefore the reasons he gives for rejecting certain grammatical notions are generally linguistic or pedagogical, rather than because they violate the perfection of the Qur'an. Secondly, since

³¹Ibid., p. 194.

Ibn Maḍā' had in large measure completed the nullification of regency with respect to verbs, Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā concentrates on nullifying the regent with respect to nouns.

Ibn Maḍā' opened his work with an attack on the notion of regency, stating that word endings are a "function of the speaker," that "(to say) that the grammatical regent causes desinential inflection...is clearly corrupt..." that "(the postulation of grammatical regents led the grammarians) to changing the speech of the Arabs," and followed this statement with a call for the elimination of tagdīr from grammatical methodology.

Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā, follows the same path, p. 2, informing us that "the rules which represent and define the system of language are in the souls of the speakers...;" that, p.50, "(inflectional vowels) are neither the remainder of a syllable nor the effect of an expressible regent. They are the work of the speaker used to indicate meaning in constructing a sentence..." and that, p. 30, "(the grammarians) legitimize styles in Arabic that the Arabs were never heard to use..." whereupon he calls for the elimination of the concept of regency and immediately thereafter appeals for the abolition of tagdīr from grammar.

Ibn Maḍā', pp. 156-61, described tagdīr as being used to supply three types of deleted words, the first type being essential to the utterance, whereas types two and three were not only non-essential, but either constitute

faulty speech or change the meaning of the utterance. Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā takes an identical course, pp. 34-36. He accepts the first type of deletion, but calls for the abolition of tagdīr of types two and three, which he calls tagdīr ṣināʾī, because using this type of suppletive insertion causes language to lose its precision.

Discussing regent suppression and whether a fronted noun should be nominative or accusative, Ibn Maḍā' says, p. 211, "...the Arabs were concerned with meanings, and created differing utterances, by and large, to distinguish differing meanings...." Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā's argument sounds identical, p. 37, "(The grammarians) fail to see that the result of different readings (nominative vs. accusative) is different meanings." Here again, there is a clear convergence of viewpoints in that both transform desinential inflection from a passive role, as the object of the causality of the regent, to an active role in the clarification of syntactic relationships.³²

A similar structural method is found between the two in the discussion of the naʿt sababī type of relative clause which modifies a preceding noun. Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā, pp. 125-26, discusses the same example taken from Ibn Jinnī by Ibn Maḍā':

hādha juḥru ḍabbīn kharībīn

³²See also Iḥyā', pp. 117-18, 122-23, for similar remarks.

"This is a destroyed lizard's den."

This in itself is not remarkable, for this citation has been the subject of grammatical speculation for centuries. What does draw our attention, however, is that just like Ibn Maḍā', Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā immediately follows with a discussion calling for the abolition of implied words in prepositional phrases.

Ibn Maḍā' then presents two sections related to latent pronouns in verbs and derived adjectives (which were considered a branch of the verb). This issue is not addressed by Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā who is concerned with regency and the noun. What again is interesting, however, is that just as Ibn Maḍā' follows with a lengthy section devoted to the application of his principles, which we have suggested may be part of al-Mushriq, so too, Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā then provides a lengthy section of his work, pp. 129-92, which he calls the Takmila, in which he demonstrates how the application of his principles apply in negation, the verb ḡanna (treated by Ibn Maḍā' under the chapter on conflict with respect to government), object-fronting, and the wāw of accompaniment (skipping the illative fā' which is related to verbs only).

The similarity of structure continues. After concluding with the wāw of accompaniment, he moves to a discussion of secondary and tertiary causes in the context of diptote nouns, p. 167, identical to that of Ibn Maḍā', p. 260 ff,

coming to the conclusion that the assertion that diptote nouns are only partially declinable because they resemble verbs is nullified by the fact that derived adjectives, which are said to be more verb-like than diptote nouns, are in fact fully declinable. Each of the sections referred to in the above two paragraphs correspond to the ordering of the same sections in the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians. Although the virtual identity of structure (allowing for the difference in emphasis on noun vs. verb) may be the result of an extraordinary coincidence, this fact coupled with the shared call for the elimination of the concept of regency and for basing grammar on a functional semantic interpretation of desinential inflection leads us to conclude that Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā indeed had read Ibn Maḍā' and drew substantial inspiration from him, both in terms of ideas, and in terms of the actual structure of Ihyā' al-naḥw, even though he did not refer to his source.

Ṭāhā `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ṭāhā has also noted the similarities between the two works:

Despite the fact (that Ihyā' al-naḥw appeared before the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians published by Shawqī Dayf), it contains many of the same points found in the latter. Indeed, the two most important viewpoints in the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians, abolition of the regent and secondary and tertiary reasons, are found in Ihyā' al-naḥw and are the basis on which Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā built his book....I do not consider it unlikely that Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā saw the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians in manuscript.... His having looked at the manuscript will become clear

as we review his study....³³

Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā's work attracted substantial attention. In 1938, a committee of scholars was formed in King Fouad I (Cairo) University and in the Egyptian Ministry of Education to study his proposal for simplifying teaching the rules of Arabic. The committee submitted a report based on their study recommending changing some grammatical terms, and reordering rules and chapters which would free the student from the need to resort to tagdīr. The inchoate subject, the agent and the pro-agent were combined into a single chapter, called the musnad ilayh (roughly "subject") and thus some simplification was provided.

In 1945, the report was discussed by the Arabic Language Academy of Cairo, and parts of the report were approved. But the conservatism of many members of the academy, and of the educational establishment in general, ensured that for the time being the report's recommendations would not be implemented.³⁴

B. Shawqī Dayf

In March 1947, Shawqī Dayf completed writing his lengthy introduction to the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians

³³Tahā, Dirāsāt fī l-naḥw, Cairo, 1971, pp. 72-73. See also p. 83 ff, where he demonstrates similar structure and content and concludes, p. 97, that "there can be no doubt that Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā had read the Book in Refutation of the Grammarians."

³⁴See introduction to Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā, et. al., Tahrīr al-naḥw al-ʿarabī, Cairo, 1958, pp. 4-6.